



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

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Partnering with the Private Sector to Disseminate Cutting-Edge Technology to Dairy Farmers in Rwanda



Fintrac Inc.

In the United States, we're familiar with messages that encourage us to consume milk and other dairy products as part of a balanced, nutritious diet. Globally, demand for milk is increasing at a rapid pace: today, milk generates nearly \$200 billion in annual sales, with demand projected to quadruple by 2050.

To meet this growing demand, dairy farmers around the world will need to find sustainable ways to scale up milk production. But to do this, they need to ensure that their milk-producing animals are healthy, a challenge that becomes more complex as dairy operations expand.

One of the major barriers to increased milk production is udder inflammation, a costly disease caused by a bacterial infection or mastitis. Mastitis decreases sales by an estimated \$20 billion annually and can permanently end a cow's ability to produce milk.

In Rwanda, mastitis losses affect a full two thirds of dairy cows, averaging \$400 per cow in annual losses. That's why Feed the Future will soon be introducing a cutting-edge technology called UdderCheck™ to Rwandan dairy farmers. Inexpensive and easy to use, UdderCheck is a dipstick that can detect enzymes that are the precursor to mastitis, giving smallholder farmers a chance to get treatment for their cows before a full-blown bacterial infection impacts productivity.

UdderCheck was developed by [PortaScience, Inc.](#), a New Jersey-based company that specializes in designing diagnostic products. PortaScience was awarded a grant to introduce the technology for the first time outside the United States by [Feed the Future Partnering for Innovation](#), a USAID program focused on partnering with the private sector to identify and commercialize agricultural technologies that can boost smallholder farmer productivity in developing countries.

In addition to routine testing, the grant also supports a partnership between PortaScience and African Breeder Services Total Cattle Management to ensure that 10,000 smallholder dairy farmers receive related training in improved hygiene practices at milk collection centers in three regions of Rwanda. The program will complement the Government of Rwanda's [Girinka](#), or one-cow-per-family program, supporting the country's key targets for smallholder dairy farm development.

By increasing dairy farmers' access to affordable technology with the potential to dramatically boost their animals' milk production, Feed the Future aims to help Rwanda accelerate national-level improvements in both incomes and food security. If scalability and affordability projections are achieved in Rwanda, PortaScience also plans to expand with other commercial partners into more East African countries – which is good news for the roughly 20 million smallholder dairy farmers in the

region.